

MEETING NOTICE & AGENDA

Board of Health Committee Meeting (Regular) or (Special)

Date: **Monday, October 9, 2023**

Time: **8:30 am**

Place: **Large Training Room**

Health and Human Services Bldg.

810 Lincoln Street

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approve Agenda
4. Approval of August Minutes
5. Citizen input (maximum 3 minutes per appearance) (15 minutes total per meeting)
6. Communicable Disease Updates
7. Reports from Cindy
 - a. August Monthly Report
 - b. September Monthly Report\
8. 2024 Budget
9. Department Updates
 - a. Agency Updates
 - b. Financial Report
10. Travel Request & Approval
10. Overtime Report
11. Next Meeting Date
12. Such other matter as authorized by law
13. Adjournment

MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

Veterans Services Committee Meeting

Date: Monday, October 9th, 2023

Time: 08:30 am

Place: Kewaunee County Human Services Large
Conference Room

1. Call to order
2. Roll call
3. Public Input
4. Approval of Current Agenda
5. Approval of August Meeting Minutes
6. Departmental Operations
 - a. Monthly Reports/Office Business
 - b. Open Claims Trend Report
 - c. Latest VA News/ Programs update
 - a. CVSO Introduction
 - b. Gulf War Clinical Trial
 - c. Warrior Rising Program
 - d. AI and Hypertension claims
7. Travel Notifications
 - a. None
8. Overtime Report
 - a. None
9. Such other matters as authorized by law
 - a. Kewaunee Veteran Services Area of Operations
10. Set next Veterans Service Committee meeting date:
11. Adjournment

Please call (920) 388-7164 if you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in this meeting.

You should attend this meeting if a matter important to you on this agenda because it is possible members of the Kewaunee County Board of Supervisors or other standing committees will be present to listen, observe, and participate in the meeting. The committees of the Board include Finance & Public Property, Public Health and Veterans, UW-Extension, Land and Water, Public Safety and Justice, Highway and Solid Waste, Parks, Promotion and Maintenance, and Executive. The Board or any other committee will take no action if majorities of the Board or any of its other committees happen to be present.

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Yearly Total
2023													
Scheduled Appointments	21	17	28	14	14	21	18	27	17				177
Walk Ins/ Phone Appointments	14	21	37	32	33	60	37	41	37				312
Incoming Phone Calls	217	178	192	252	118	176	101	144	81				1459
Outgoing Phone Calls	194	126	236	235	130	182	164	178	185				1630
Outgoing Mail/E-mails/Fax	214	201	271	177	80	105	74	113	196				1431
Vet Relief Applications	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	1				6
Misc Office Activity (Training, Travel, Home Visits)	5	10	8	11	7	1	5	1	3				51
Veteran Travel Program	9	7	10	4	0	0	0	0	0				30
Green Bay /Local Milwaukee	6	5	9	3	0	0	0	0	0				23
Applications Completed:	3	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0				7
Compensations	20	21	27	10	7	6	13	17	11				132
Pensions	4	12	13	6	4	3	2	7	12				63
Intent to Files	5	5	2	2	0	0	1	0	0				15
Appeals	7	2	8	1	1	2	4	5	0				30
Healthcare Applications	1	0	1	1	2	0	1	2	6				14
	3	2	3	0	0	1	5	3	0				17

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Yearly Total
2022													
Scheduled Appointments	17	14	9	8	11	11	15	34	32	21	31	17	220
Walk Ins/ Phone Appointments	22	19	22	20	24	9	5	21	29	18	19	21	229
Incoming Phone Calls	188	205	217	177	214	130	165	209	214	125	198	187	2229
Outgoing Phone Calls	134	135	183	151	172	128	214	265	231	153	203	196	2165
Outgoing Mail/E-mails/Fax	210	251	231	215	259	213	153	198	147	201	187	164	2429
Vet Relief Applications	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	3	2	2	3	16
Misc Office Activity (Training, Travel, Home Visits)	2	7	4	5	3	7	6	8	7	4	11	19	83
Applications Completed:													
Compensations	0	1	3	1	0	4	3	6	8	3	3	4	36
Pensions	5	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	3	1	1	1	17
Intent to Files	2	1	2	3	0	1	3	4	5	6	4	5	36
Appeals	1	1	0	1	1	2	1	3	2	2	3	2	19
Healthcare Applications	1	3	1	1	2	0	2	3	4	3	4	6	30

ARE YOU A GULF WAR VETERAN WHO HAS:



**Trouble sleeping?
Gulf War Illness (GWI)
symptoms?**



You may be eligible for the
Gulf War Apnea and Insomnia Relief (GW AIR) Study
An online sleep apnea and insomnia treatment program
aiming to improve your sleep and manage GWI symptoms.



Research shows a good night's sleep has positive effects in other areas of your life, like mood, cognition and daily functioning. This study aims to see if reducing your sleep apnea and insomnia symptoms will also reduce your GWI symptoms.

Location:

This is a
FULLY REMOTE study.

You will be asked to:

- Attend a clinical interview call
- Take a home sleep apnea test
- Maintain a daily sleep diary and answer online surveys
- Attend six weekly virtual Sleep Education Therapies

You will receive:

- Positive Airway Pressure (PAP) device to treat obstructive sleep apnea
- Individual Sleep Education Therapy done virtually
- Compensation of up to \$255 after completing the study



Are you eligible?

- 48-80 years old
- Desert Storm/Desert Shield Veteran
- Trouble sleeping
- GWI symptoms
- Access to wireless internet connection

Call or email our study coordinator to find out more!

- **Alyssa Indrajaya**
- **415-630-0273**
- **alyssa.indrajaya@va.gov**



Are you a Veteran with aspirations of entrepreneurship and business ownership? Do you need guidance to help you put your idea into action?

Warrior Rising is positioned to help you. A non-profit organization launched by Veterans for Veterans in 2015, Warrior Rising is dedicated to transforming Veterans into “Vetrepreneurs,” providing them opportunities to create sustainable businesses, perpetuate the hiring of fellow American Veterans and earning their future.

Warrior Rising’s next online course starts Sept. 28. This free Service-Disabled Veteran Entrepreneurs (SDVET) program includes four weeks of web-based instruction, followed by participation in other programs Warrior Rising offers (Warrior Academy, VETtoCEO, virtual-live coaching/mentoring sessions).

Course information

- Introduction and overview of starting a business, as well as advantages to purchasing an existing business or starting a franchise.
- Identifying opportunities in business.
- Understanding markets and competitive space.
- Building your economic model.
- Legal entity structuring and insurance.
- Financing options (including latest in capital agreements, ex. “SAFE” agreements).
- Business plan creation.
- Available resources and VOSBs.

The course is offered by Warrior Rising as part of its SDVET program, sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration, and is free to all verified service-disabled Veterans (see qualifications below). Attendees may be located anywhere throughout the U.S.

Sessions (When)

Virtual live sessions (via Zoom) will be at 7 p.m. ET (4 p.m. PT) on the following Thursdays: Oct. 5, 12, 19 and 25. The Zoom link will be provided by email two (2) business days prior to start of the sessions.

Important: Please ensure your information is correct when registering (especially email address). Please check your spam folder (or in some cases, if you have auto-routing rules set up for your email, it may be bypassing your inbox altogether and going to trash or another folder you’ve set up in your email). It will be the same link for every session. Also, please be aware that Warrior Rising’s email provider also distributes newsletter and other information.

If you unsubscribe, you will not receive any messages (including the links for these sessions).

Qualifications

For verification, a DD-214 is preferred (please blackline or cover your SSN), or other VA-issued ID. Class attendees must also provide documentation from VA showing disability (any disability rating is sufficient).

Current or widowed spouses of qualifying Veterans may also participate, but you must provide the required documentation above.

Interested Veterans must be pursuing a career as an entrepreneur/business owner at the concept or early stage of business development for this program.

Please note that while this particular program is funded for service-disabled Veterans particularly, Warrior Rising has other programs available (Warrior Academy, VETtoCEO, coaching/mentoring) that any Veteran can participate in. More information can be found at www.WarriorRising.org, under the tab "What We Do."

Apply (How)

Apply no later than 6 p.m. ET on Oct. 2, 2023, at [Warrior Rising SDVET Program Registration](#). The next presentation of this course will be on Sept. 28.

Warrior Rising is a 501c3 non-profit comprised of Veterans, and it offers free entrepreneurship training to current and former military service members. Visit [Warrior Rising](#) for more information or contact programming@WarriorRising.org. Please include your email address in the body/text of your message or we will not have a way to respond to you.

The sharing of any non-VA information does not constitute an endorsement of products and services on the part of VA. Veterans should verify the information with the organization offering.

VA's Automated Benefits System Made Errors in 27% of High Blood Pressure Claims, Watchdog Report Says

U.S. Air Force medical technician with the New Jersey Air National Guard, checks a homeless veteran's blood pressure during Stand Down 2017 at the All Wars Memorial Building in Atlantic City, N.J., May 17, 2017. (New Jersey National Guard photo by Mark C. Olsen)

26 Sep 2023

Military.com | By [Patricia Kime](#)

An automated system designed to accelerate disability claims decisions at the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) contributed to inaccurate ratings for 27% of claims filed for high blood pressure, a new report from the VA's inspector general has found.

The [Automated Benefits Delivery System](#), introduced in December 2021 ahead of an anticipated flood of disability applications related to the [PACT Act](#), pulls blood pressure readings and high blood pressure-related medical data from VA treatment records and creates a summary sheet that is reviewed by VA staff, known as rating veterans service representatives.

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But a [review by the VA Office of the Inspector General](#) published Monday found that in samples of summary sheets, 37% of the first batch of 30 sheets were deficient, as were 57% of the second 30 sheets. These inaccuracies resulted in wrongful decisions by the ratings representatives for more than a quarter of the 60 claims.

Read Next: [Catcalling, Racist Comments, Burnout: Alaska Troops Eyed as Prestigious Arctic Force Face Problems in First Year of Service](#)

The report did not detail the extent of the errors or say whether the decisions favored the veterans or the VA. It also covered a limited number of examples at a time when the technology was in development.

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The report comes as a growing number of Vietnam-era veterans have filed claims under the PACT Act for high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, and [have received 0% disability ratings for their condition](#), which has been linked to exposure for Agent Orange.

VA assigns a disability rating for service-connected conditions based on the disabling effect of an illness or injury. In many cases, high blood pressure can be controlled by medication and is

not a hindrance to daily activities and employment -- a state that may result in a 0% disability rating.

According to the IG report, the errors in ratings assignment resulted from errors in summary sheets that included missing or inaccurate blood pressure readings, missing medications prescribed for high blood pressure and a lack of context as to where or when the readings were taken -- for example, in an emergency room or during a time of stress.

Larry Reinkemeyer, VA assistant inspector general for audits and evaluation and the report's lead author, said the issues with the system were largely technical, attributable to failures with the automation system recognizing data, and largely fixable.

The OIG recommended that VA make technology improvements, increase quality assurance and monitor all results for accuracy of summary sheets and final decisions. Also, the department should study whether the automated system is, in fact, speedier and better than the traditional process in which a veterans service representative gathers all the information.

"Failure to improve oversight increases the risk that eligible veterans will not receive the benefits to which they are entitled, and [the Veterans Benefits Administration] will invest additional funds in a process and technology that do not deliver the intended outcomes," Reinkemeyer wrote.

VA officials agreed, for the most part, with the recommendations. But they noted that the automation system was in its nascency when the Office of Inspector General conducted its review.

According to VA, the system is used at 16 prototype and pilot sites, where it has processed less than 8% of the total high blood pressure claims considered nationwide.

"At the time of the review, OIG was reviewing cases in the very early stages of the verify phase. Completion of prototyping and a pilot phase had not yet been complete, and technology was still being developed and enhanced," VA officials wrote in response.

The VA rolled out the Automated Benefits Delivery System with an aim to reduce the disability application time for claims submitted for common conditions in veterans, including high blood pressure, asthma, sleep apnea and prostate cancer.

VA officials said the technology "has been widely adopted by both industry and government to reduce administrative burden for employees," and at no point would the final decisions on claims be made by the system.

More than 1 million claims have been filed under the PACT Act, the law passed last year that broadened health-care and disability benefits for millions of former service members exposed to environmental pollutants and toxic chemicals while serving in certain locations overseas.

Of those claims, 570,000 have been decided, with nearly 80% approved. Of the 80% approved, however, roughly one-third have received a 0% disability rating, meaning that affected veterans have at least one service-connected condition under the law that is not disabling -- for example,

high blood pressure, which has been linked to Agent Orange exposure, that is controlled by medication.

According to VA, other conditions that have received the 0% rating under PACT Act allowances include allergic rhinitis, maxillary sinusitis, bronchial asthma and "malignant growth of the genitourinary system," which includes prostate, testicular and other types of cancers that may be curable with surgery and treatment.

VA has a higher threshold for veterans to meet to receive a disability rating for hypertension than the medical definition. For disability rating purposes, VA regards hypertension as having a diastolic blood pressure (the lower number) as 90 mm or greater, or a systolic blood pressure (the top number) of 160 mm or higher with the lower number being less than 90 mm.

The American Heart Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention classify high blood pressure in two stages, with the higher stage being systolic readings over 140 mm and diastolic being 90 mm and higher.

High blood pressure raises the risk of stroke, heart attack, heart failure and other health conditions.

VA Under Secretary for Benefits Joshua Jacobs said last week the department is reviewing its ratings schedule to determine whether it can be revised to address medically controlled conditions such as high blood pressure.